

I. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. *(Original)* A single vessel containing N-hydrosuccinimide (NHS), a water-soluble carbodiimide and a label containing an amine or a carboxyl moiety, these components being in a single vessel in dry form suitable for rehydration at pH about 7.
2. *(Cancelled)*
3. *(Cancelled)*
4. *(Cancelled)*
5. *(Cancelled)*
6. *(Cancelled)*
7. *(Previously Presented)* A single vessel containing a label derivatized with one functionality of a heterofunctional reagent and means for activating the unreacted functionality of the heterofunctional reagent or its reaction partner, these components being in a single vessel in dry form suitable for rehydration.
8. *(Previously Presented)* A method of conjugating a label to a target moiety, comprising the following steps:
 - i. step for preparing a derivitized label wherein one functionality of a heterofunctional reagent is covalently linked to a label;
 - ii. step for preparing a container containing,
 - (1) derivatized label, and
 - (2) means for activating an unreacted functionality of the heterofunctional reagent or its reaction partner, such that said derivatized label and said means are sequestered;
 - iii. step for releasing sequestration of said derivatized label and said means to permit reaction in the presence of a target moiety, whereby the target moiety is conjugated to the derivatized label.

9. *(Currently Amended)* A method of conjugating label to target moiety according to claim 8, comprising:
 - a. derivatizing a label containing primary or secondary amines with a heterobifunctional reagent having a maleimide functionality;
 - b. placing maleimide derivatized label in a container with a reductant in dry form;
 - c. hydrating label and reductant; and
 - d. removing reductant in the presence of a target moiety, whereby the target moiety is conjugated to the label.
10. *(Currently Amended)* A single vessel containing a label containing an amine or carboxyl moiety, and a bifunctional reagent, these components being in dry form suitable for rehydration at pH about 7, wherein upon rehydration said bifunctional reagent reacts with the said label.
11. *(Previously Presented)* The single vessel according to claim 10, wherein the label is a phycobiliprotein.
12. *(Previously Presented)* The single vessel according to claim 10, wherein the bifunctional reagent is SMCC (Succinimidyl-4-(N-Maleimidomethyl)Cyclohexane-1-Carboxylate) or SPDP (N-Succinimidyl 3-(2-pyridylthio)propionate).
13. *(New)* A method for conjugating label to target moiety comprising:
 - a. placing a label, NHS, and a carbodiimide in a container such that the three components are sequestered from reaction with each other;
 - b. storing the components in dry form; and
 - c. hydrating the components to initiate reaction between them,
wherein a target is added at the time the components are hydrated and
the target is subsequently conjugated to the label.
14. *(New)* A method for conjugating label to target moiety comprising:

- a placing a label, NHS, and a carbodiimide in a container such that the three components are sequestered from reaction with each other;
- b storing the components in dry form; and
- c hydrating the components to initiate reaction between them,
wherein a target is added subsequent to hydrating the components and
the target is conjugated to the label.